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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the statement of the President of the Security Council of 31 October 2001 (S/PRST/2001/30), in which the Council requested me to submit a report, at least every four months, on the situation in Somalia and the efforts to promote the peace process, including updates on the scope of and contingency planning for launching a peace-building mission for Somalia. In addition, in its resolution 1425 (2002) of 22 July 2002, and by its presidential statement of 12 December 2002 (S/PRST/2002/35), the Security Council requested me to continue putting in place, in a coherent manner, preparatory activities on the ground for a comprehensive post-conflict peace-building mission in Somalia once security conditions permit. The Security Council also required me to provide updates on the technical assistance and cooperation given to enhance administrative and judicial capacities throughout Somalia for the monitoring of and giving full effect to the arms embargo, in accordance with the statement of its President on 28 March 2002 (S/PRST/2002/8) and resolution 1407 (2002) of 3 May 2002, and on the reporting by States to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) on measures they have taken to ensure the full and effective implementation of the arms embargo, in accordance with resolution 1407 (2002).

2. The main focus of the report, which covers the period since my last report of 25 October 2002 (S/2002/1201), is the progress made and the challenges faced in the Somali national reconciliation process at Eldoret, Kenya, under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) under Kenyan chairmanship. The report also provides information on the general political and security situation in Somalia as well as on the humanitarian and development activities of United Nations programmes and agencies, including measures taken in response to resolution 1425 (2002), and an update on the status of the Trust Fund for Peace-Building in Somalia.

II. Developments inside Somalia

3. During the period under review, many Somali leaders and their representatives continued to participate in the deliberations of the Somali National Reconciliation Conference in Eldoret (Eldoret Conference). One notable exception was "Somaliland", which refused to participate in the peace process. Within Somalia,

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however, inter- and intra-clan fighting continued to break out in a number of places despite the signing, on 27 October 2002, of a Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the Somali national reconciliation process (see S/2002/1359, annex), hereafter referred to as the Eldoret Declaration.

4. In the Bermuda area of south Mogadishu, fighting between Abgal sub-clans in mid-December 2002 resulted in some 10 militiamen killed and 20 wounded. The fighting spread to the K-4 area and Medina district of the city, where an unspecified number of civilian casualties were reported. Elders from the two sides were able to establish a temporary ceasefire. Nevertheless, more than 20 people, including 6 schoolchildren were killed in an attack on a minibus on 24 December. Frequent kidnappings have also continued, and a total of 22 Somali civilians were reported to have been held for ransom during the period under review.

5. In the south-west, fighting over control of the city of Baidoa and its immediate environs between the militias of Colonel Hassan Mohamed Nur "Shatigadud", Chairman of the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA), and his two former deputies has continued (S/2002/1201, para. 9), with the city changing hands on a number of occasions. The city is currently controlled by militias opposed to Colonel "Shatigadud".

6. Further to the west, 40 people were reported killed in intra-Marehan clan fighting in Luuq on 29 October. In Kismayo, fighting between members of the Marehan and Habr-Gedir clans on 21 January 2003 resulted in casualties on both sides as well as the death of two civilians, including a child in an internally displaced persons camp. Intervention by elders from both sides helped to stop the fighting.

7. In the north-east, forces loyal to Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed of "Puntland" were reported to have attacked Jeded and Qarar-soor villages in Qardho district on 30 December 2002, to disperse rival militiamen loyal to Jama Ali Jama. In a meeting with my Representative in Eldoret, Mr. Jama claimed that Colonel Yusuf and General Mohamed Said Hersi "Morgan" had obtained arms from Ethiopia to launch the attack on his militia. He also accused Colonel Yusuf's forces of killing the District Commissioner of Qardho on 26 December.

8. In "Somaliland", security conditions have remained generally calm, and local and municipal elections took place in December 2002 (see para. 9 below). However, there was concern about possible hostilities with "Puntland" when the leader of "Somaliland", Dahir Riyale Kahin, dispatched an advance team that included troops and "technicals" to Las Anod in the Sool region, which is claimed by both "Somaliland" and "Puntland", to prepare his visit. The team had been preceded by one of the elders and "ministers" who sought to win support for "Somaliland" in the region. The arrival of Mr. Kahin in Las Anod on 7 December resulted in fighting between troops from "Somaliland" and local militia that were reinforced by troops from "Puntland". The casualties were never confirmed, but the deaths included the claimant to the post of Governor of Sool, affiliated to "Puntland", as well as one of the bodyguards of Mr. Kahin.

9. Local and municipal elections in "Somaliland" other than the Sool region took place on 15 December without incident. On 30 December, the Chairmen of the Kulmiye and UCID political parties in "Somaliland" urged the "Somaliland" administration to postpone the "Presidential Election" that had been scheduled for

23 January 2002 to allow the two parties adequate time to put forth candidates that would challenge Mr. Kahin and his running mate who belong to the UDUB party. Reports indicate that the "Presidential Election" is now scheduled for 15 April to be followed by "Parliamentary elections" in late May 2003.

Security

10. The security situation in several parts of Somalia, in particular in the south and in and around Mogadishu and Baidoa, is posing serious difficulties for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. In spite of the signing of the Eldoret Declaration and the December agreements (see paras. 23-26 below), the seaport and airport in Mogadishu remain closed. The level of banditry and extortion remains high and the kidnapping of Somalis working for the United Nations and other international aid organizations remains a serious concern. On 27 October, a national officer of the United Nations Food Security Assessment Unit, Ali Ahmed Farah, was shot and injured outside Beletwein, reportedly by bandits, and on 17 December, a bomb went off at the office of the Adventist Development Relief Agency in Beletwein. Following a security assessment, all United Nations operations in the area were suspended until 14 January 2003.

11. On 30 December, a Swiss national, Martin Jutzi, was murdered in a shooting incident in Hargeisa, "Somaliland". He was employed by a Swiss organization that was reportedly planning to operate a poultry farm in "Somaliland". The culprits are yet to be apprehended in spite of the efforts of the "Somaliland" administration in collaboration with the international community.

The humanitarian situation

12. As a result of the continued fighting within Somalia, the provision of humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance to a significant proportion of the population — which is already facing destitution and malnutrition and lack of access to, or absence of, even the most basic social services — has been repeatedly disrupted.

13. In addition to instability and insecurity in Mogadishu, Baidoa, once a stable humanitarian base, remains closed to United Nations international staff due to the recent fighting. Although United Nations national staff and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with some monitoring capability have continued to operate in the area, it has been difficult to carry out needs assessments and ascertain the level of displacement of the civilian population in the area. Some of the most vulnerable communities are resident around Kismayo and the Mudug region, where the humanitarian presence remains minimal and humanitarian needs are largely unassessed, and Mogadishu, where the protection of civilians continues to be a serious concern. United Nations agencies, several international NGOs and the International Committee of the Red Cross are exploring the possibility of resuming their activities in Kismayo, in particular.

14. A joint mission of the Internal Displacement Unit of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Brookings Institution to Kismayo and Hargeisa in January 2003 informed the United Nations Country Team that internally displaced persons continued to live in congested and unsanitary conditions, lacked access to basic services and were subject to rape and other human rights violations from armed elements in and around the camps. The Country Team

is reassessing means of addressing the hu- nitarian and protection needs of internally displaced persons throughout Soma. a, including through settling them in safer locations.

15. In view of the situation, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator has launched a two-pronged strategy for addressing the issue of humanitarian access. Firstly, by directly engaging with clan and faction leaders in Eldoret and, secondly, by approaching representatives of the leaders as well as civil society, business and religious leadership in the field. To this end, the Humanitarian Coordinator and representatives of the Country Team plan to undertake several missions focusing on access issues in the first quarter of 2003. As access becomes more assured, a coordinated response to the needs and rights of vulnerable communities, including internally displaced persons, most of whom are living in and around urban areas, will be established.

16. The United Nations, the European Commission and international NGOs also worked closely to avert a potential problem with middle Shabelle authorities, who in late December demanded that the United Nations pay landing fees for the use of the Jowhar airstrip. Their demands (subsequently withdrawn) threatened humanitarian access not only in Jowhar (which serves as the main base of operations for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as well as two international NGOs) but also for operations throughout the country. As a result of this experience, policy guidelines to clarify minimum standards and charges for air operations throughout the country are under joint review by United Nations and European Commission providers of air service inside Somalia.

17. Somalia benefited from relatively good rainfall at the end of 2002, allowing for the regeneration of pastures and potentially improved crop production in some areas, in particular in the southern and central regions of Hiran, Bakol, Gedo and the Shabelle and Juba Valleys. However, insecurity and displacement in some areas of northern Gedo and in parts of the lower and middle Juba Valley have prevented some farmers from planting crops.

18. While Somalia has so far escaped the acute drought in the region, the north-western part of the country has been experiencing an influx of households and livestock migrating since January 2003 from the eastern Shinile zone and Aysha Woreda region of Ethiopia in search of pasture and water. United Nations reports indicate that more than 6,000 head of livestock have migrated into the Awdal region in "Somaliland", well above the norm for this time of year. This influx has the potential of quickly exhausting available pastures and "spreading" the drought into Somalia, which could place additional pressures on food security in the north-western part of the country.

19. Furthermore, due to low rainfall in the highlands of Ethiopia, water levels of the two main rivers, Juba and Shabelle, are reported below normal, affecting the upcoming planting season in the breadbasket regions of southern Somalia, with increased costs of irrigation and reduced crop yields and incomes.

20. Several confirmed cases of cholera marked the onset of the cholera season in mid-December. However, preparedness measures have been accelerated, such as training of health-care workers, community awareness campaigns and chlorination of wells. There was an increase in reported cholera cases in 2002 as compared to 2001, attributed to improved surveillance and different rain patterns. However, the

decreasing case fatality rate, now approaching 5 per cent is an indication of improving quality of care through training and supervision.

21. The 2003 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Somalia was launched in November 2002. United Nations agencies and three international NGOs appealed for $77.8 million to address emergency humanitarian needs, while at the same time supporting community-based peace initiatives. As of early February, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland and the European Community have contributed to the 2003 Appeal.

III. The Somali national reconciliation process

22. As previously reported (S/2002/1201), the Somali national reconciliation process began with the convening of the Eldoret Conference under IGAD auspices on 15 October 2002. In addition to some 350 invited Somali leaders, political figures and civil society representatives, almost double that number have been present at the Conference venue.

23. The first phase of the process concluded on 27 October with the signing of the Eldoret Declaration by 22 Somali leaders, including one on behalf of civil society. It was witnessed by the representatives of the international community.

24. The Somali parties, inter alia, undertook to create federal governance structures in Somalia, and endorsed the principle of decentralization; cease hostilities; guarantee the security of all humanitarian and development personnel and installations; implement the outcomes of the national reconciliation process and the United Nations arms embargo for Somalia; combat terrorism and cooperate in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001); and invite IGAD, the African Union and the international community to support and monitor the implementation of the agreements reached.

25. On 4 November, President Daniel arap Moi transmitted to me a copy of the Eldoret Declaration, and called for the support of the international community and the United Nations in its implementation. The African Union and the Presidency of the European Union (see S/2002/1127, annex) welcomed the signing of the Declaration and expressed support for the efforts of IGAD and Kenya. Ethiopia also issued a statement welcoming the Declaration and pledged its cooperation to ensure further progress in the process.

26. In another positive development, on 2 December, five Mogadishu faction leaders* and the Transitional National Government signed an agreement in which they pledged to ensure peace and security in Mogadishu. Furthermore, on 4 December, the five faction leaders signed another agreement that included a commitment to make efforts to reopen the international seaport and airport in Mogadishu. My Representative welcomed the agreements as an important step but stressed the need for their implementation. He stated that the reopening of the seaport and airport in Mogadishu, if realized, would be a major yardstick to measure the commitment of the leaders to secure peace and normalcy in Mogadishu.

* Mohamed Qanyare Afrah; Musse Sudi "Yallahow"; Hussein Mohamed Aidid; Osman Hassan Ali "Atto"; and Omar Mahmud Mohamed "Finish".

27. The second phase of the Somali national reconciliation process has experienced serious difficulties due to controversy regarding the number of participants in both the plenary meeting of the Conference and in the six reconciliation committees that would deliberate and report on specific aspects of the process (para. 28). The Somali leaders and representatives were unable to reach agreement on a formula of representation that would limit the number of participants to about 350 as proposed by the IGAD Technical Committee overseeing the process. Such a reduction became an imperative in view of administrative problems and the shortage of funds for the Conference. The Kenyan Special Envoy and Chairman of the IGAD Technical Committee, Elijah Mwangale, finally resorted to a formula which accorded an equal number of seats (84 each) to the four main clans of Somalia and half that number to the minority clans as a group.

28. On 29 November, Mr. Mwangale launched the second phase of the reconciliation process and circulated a list of the membership of the six reconciliation committees which would report to the Leaders Committee and the plenary meeting of the Conference on: Federalism and a Provisional Federal Charter; Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration; Land and Property Rights; Economic Institution Building and Resource Mobilization; Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation; and Regional and International Relations. However, controversy among Somali leaders over membership of the Committees delayed their work for several weeks.

29. Faced with criticism from Somali leaders, Mr. Mwangale asked the Leaders Committee to take charge of the Conference and come up with ideas on the way forward. On 15 December, the Leaders Committee resolved to maintain 300 as the number of delegates for phase II of the Conference, on the basis of the 4.5 clan formula (see para. 27 above). The same formula would, they said, be applied to a transitional parliament of 450 to be set up after final agreement was reached. The Leaders Committee rejected the subsequent attempt by Mr. Mwangale and some observers to add another 100 delegates as representatives of civil society. The Leaders Committee insisted that civil society representation be limited to 16 delegates, as each of the clan delegations included civil society representatives. The issue remains unresolved.

30. Following the inauguration of the new Government of Kenya on 30 December, President Mwai Kibaki reiterated support for the IGAD-led Somali national reconciliation process. The new Government announced the appointment of Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat as the new Special Envoy of Kenya on 18 January 2003. Somali leaders, neighbouring countries and donors have welcomed Mr. Kiplagat's appointment.

31. The Foreign Ministers of the Frontline States (Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya) held consultations on the reconciliation process in Addis Ababa on 2 February 2003. They expressed concern about the violations of the Eldoret Declaration and decided to establish a committee, with immediate effect, that would be responsible for monitoring implementation of the Eldoret Declaration and taking appropriate action. They agreed to establish a mechanism to monitor ceasefire violations, which would consist of representatives of the IGAD Technical Committee and international partners. They welcomed the planned relocation of the Conference venue from Eldoret to Mbagathi, on the outskirts of Nairobi, as a cost-saving measure. The

Ministers agreed to meet once a month to discuss the process and the first meeting is scheduled for 1 March.

32. On 26 January, the Leaders Committee called for the representation of "Somaliland" at the Somali national reconciliation process, a call that was promptly rejected by "Somaliland". The Ministers decided to defer discussion on this issue to a later meeting.

IV. Activities in support of peace and reconciliation in Somalia

33. My Representative and staff of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia have maintained a permanent presence at the Conference and provided assistance as required by the IGAD Technical Committee, the Somali parties and civil society groups. My Representative also participated in the meeting of the IGAD Foreign Ministers of the Frontline States on Somalia in Addis Ababa on 2 February (para. 31).

34. The World Bank, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), funded experts to support the Economic Institution Building and Resource Mobilization Reconciliation Committee of the Somali national reconciliation process, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) conducted a workshop for Somali women representatives at the Eldoret Conference.

35. The Panel of Experts, established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1425 (2002) to generate independent information on violations of the arms embargo as a step towards giving effect to and strengthening the embargo, is expected to submit its report by March 2003, in accordance with paragraph 11 of the resolution.

36. The following contributions have been received for the Trust Fund for Peace-Building in Somalia during the period under review: Ireland, $34,668.65; Italy, $536,150.00; and Norway, $836,533.39.

37. Of immediate concern is the appalling situation of many vulnerable communities in Somalia, internally displaced persons, rural and urban poor, and minority clans. In addition to poor access to basic services, human rights violations, including sexual violence against women, are commonplace, especially among vulnerable groups living in southern Somali cities. Improving access to basic services and enhanced protection are immediate priorities for these people, many of whom have been disenfranchised for over a decade.

38. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) forecasts an end to the return of Somali refugees from Ethiopia and Djibouti by 2004. The return in 2002 of over 32,000 Somali refugees, mostly to "Somaliland", allowed them to participate in peace-building and reconstruction efforts and to exercise their right to vote in the municipal elections held in December 2002. Progress has also been made with regard to the provision of basic services to returnees, internally displaced persons and host communities. UNDP provided basic social services through the Returning Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons programme, which is part of a subregional initiative of IGAD in cooperation with UNHCR and UNDP for the reintegration of uprooted populations in the Horn of Africa. Eighteen quick impact projects were implemented by UNDP to address urgent water, sanitation, health, education and shelter needs. Similarly, over 100

reintegration quick impact projects were implemented by UNHCR during 2002 in "Somaliland", "Puntland" and Mogadishu and its environs. UNHCR also provided emergency support to the water supply system for the town of Hargeisa and surrounding settlements of returning refugees and internally displaced persons. Although these interventions have helped communities to absorb returning refugees with reduced competition over scarce resources and thus contributed to peace and stability, the gap between needs and available services and income-generation opportunities remains wide and continues to be a concern.

39. UNDP made progress in enhancing projects in the areas of rule of law, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration, and small arms control. In "Somaliland" and "Puntland", the UNDP new Rule of Law and Security Programme, formerly known as the Somalia Civil Protection Programme, initiated demobilization, disarmament and reintegration interventions. The Puntland Development Research Centre conducted workshops focusing on the special legal context in Somalia. Through the Academy for Peace and Development, 44 police officers were given human rights training. Six hundred sets of uniform and communication equipment were supplied to police officers and police stations in "Somaliland". A vital component of the programme is the inclusion of trained female police and custodial officers. Female training barracks were constructed in the Mandera Police Training Centre to accommodate 40 female police students. A registration programme of police weapons is also being conducted in an effort to control the proliferation of small arms.

40. UNIFEM carried out a training series on human rights, international conventions and access to justice for human rights NGOs and law enforcement agencies in "Somaliland", "Puntland", Hiran region, and Mogadishu.

41. In "Somaliland", UNDP continued to support peace-building activities through its cadastral survey project that had initially been implemented in rural areas. A new project was designed in September 2002, as a precursor to broader application in Somali urban centres. In addition, and within the context of demobilization, UNDP provided agricultural assistance to war veterans in areas that had already been mapped and surveyed by the cadastral survey project. UNDP also continued to support microcredit schemes in favour of war widows in "Somaliland".

42. The mine action component of the UNDP Rule of Law and Security Programme trained 24 Somali Mine Action Centre staff in "Somaliland". Such training included the basic demining course with supervision provided by the Danish Demining Group and data management provided by the Geneva International Centre on Humanitarian Demining. During the current reporting period, three management-level staff members of the programme attended a two-month mine action course in the United Kingdom. Similarly, two officers from the Somali Mine Action Centre were trained at a course held in Jordan.

43. In partnership with a Mogadishu-based NGO, UNICEF supported the reintegration of 120 former child soldiers into the community through a programme of vocational training, conflict resolution and trauma counselling. Engagement of the private sector and local companies in this project is an innovation that resulted in employment opportunities for the former child soldiers after completion of their training. A study was also conducted on the impact of small arms and light weapons proliferation in Somalia. Its recommendations, in particular regarding conflict resolution, peace-building and psychosocial support, will be implemented in 2003.

44. UNICEF supported local authorities and other stakeholders in the development of a child-friendly juvenile justice and law enforcement system. In consultation with Save the Children-United Kingdom, UNICEF conducted a comprehensive child protection study that will lead to targeted programmes to reach children vulnerable to the effects of conflict, violence, abuse and exploitation. At present, initiatives include select capacity-building of youth groups, the prevention of substance abuse and the provision of learning opportunities. UNICEF also assisted local education authorities in increasing the number of schools, distributed new, child-centred textbooks and curriculum, invested in teacher training, and worked with parent groups and education committees to increase enrolment.

45. The Peace Resource Centre in Erigavo negotiated and concluded a series of individual and collective agreements with 32 sultans and local chiefs in Sanaag region. The agreements bind local traditional leaders to take responsibility for the arrest and handover to civil authorities of any clan member engaged in violent or illegal activity that threatens the peace of the region or disrupts the operations of aid organizations. This agreement in effect removes the shield of clan protection under which some criminal and violent activities are carried out. Peace Resource Centres in Garowe, Beletwein, Merka and Baidoa and a network of community groups have been mobilized to play an active role in collecting and synthesizing opinions from ordinary Somalis to feed in as part of the contribution of civil society to the Somali national reconciliation process as it enters into discussions on issues of governance in its second and third phases.

46. Through its Peace Resource Centres in eight cities and towns (Erigavo, Garowe, Hargeisa, Bossasso, Beletwein, Merka, Baidoa and Mogadishu), UNESCO organized eight workshops to train members of a network of 198 community groups and local NGOs on issues of conflict resolution, human rights and gender as well as the training of 396 community group leaders as trainers. They, in turn, organized second-level workshops in their communities, in which a total of 3,956 community members were given training in the same areas. These community members are emerging as important contributors to constructive dialogue and in enhancing the role of civil society in various parts of the country.

47. UNIFEM held a series of workshops and trainings on gender and HIV/AIDS for 60 policy makers in "Somaliland" and "Puntland" as part of the development process of a national HIV/AIDS policy, while UNICEF provided training for 15 HIV/AIDS counsellors in Boroma. With the assistance of UNICEF, UNHCR has been active in HIV/AIDS-awareness activities for refugees from other countries resident in Somalia, as well as other reproductive health issues, including advocacy against harmful traditional practices. While results are still difficult to measure, the interventions went a long way in informing further such actions in the inter-agency context in 2003.

48. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) conducted a reproductive health baseline survey in north-west Somalia, trained traditional birth attendants and rape counsellors and mobilized anti-female-genital mutilation committees in Somali refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia. The refugee reproductive health projects also supported voluntary counselling, HIV/AIDS testing and promotion of the use of condoms.

49. Recognizing the key role of the livestock industry in the economy of Somalia and the debilitating effect of the continued ban on Somali livestock by States of the

Arabian peninsula, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNDP continued to support the development of an internationally recognized certification system for the export of livestock and livestock products by strengthening the country's institutional capacity. Additional activities will be launched by FAO in early 2003 to support the livestock industry in northern Somalia. In addition, UNHCR and UNDP are collaborating in the construction of a new slaughterhouse in Hargeisa.

50. UNHCR completed the physical reconstruction of the Hargeisa Health Training Institute. Other agencies, including UNICEF and the World Health Organization, are in the process of making the facility fully functional.

V. Observations

51. The international community continues to support the Somali national reconciliation process launched under the auspices of IGAD and led by Kenya. The new Government of Kenya has spared no time in reiterating Kenya's commitment to its lead role in the regional peace effort. The appointment of the new Special Envoy of Kenya was a welcome development and is expected to help to infuse renewed vigour in the peace process.

52. In addition to the recent appointment of a Special Envoy of the African Union for Somalia, the generous financial contribution of the European Union and the sustained engagement of envoys from its member countries, as well as those of the IGAD Partners Forum and the League of Arab States underscore the commitment of the international community to a negotiated and inclusive agreement in Somalia.

53. I commend the IGAD Frontline States for the recent decision of their foreign ministers to meet at least once a month to discuss the progress made and the challenges faced in the effort to restore reconciliation and normalcy to Somalia. I also take note of their decision to set up a mechanism to monitor compliance with the Eldoret Declaration.

54. It has become increasingly clear that inside Somalia the continued outbreaks of hostilities are motivated by individual rivalries of faction leaders and criminal activities rather than wider issues. Clearly, the ordinary people and traditional leaders are war-weary and yearn for peace and a way out of years of conflict, instability and deprivation. It is those that have the weapons of war who continue to hold the people of Somalia hostage to the cycle of violence. The Somali people and the international community will no doubt hold them accountable for their actions if they persist on the path of confrontation and conflict.

55. I encourage all the Somali leaders participating in the Conference to rededicate themselves to the search for national reconciliation in their country. They must cooperate in the IGAD-led endeavour aimed at ending over a decade of conflict in Somalia and the immense suffering it has caused its people. It is essential that they agree on an inclusive political dispensation for the future of the country by putting their narrow differences aside and living up to commitments made to their fellow countrymen.

56. The first phase of the Somali national reconciliation process ended with the signing of the Eldoret Declaration on 27 October 2002, by which the participants, pledged, among other things, to cease hostilities and guarantee the security of all

humanitarian and development personnel and installations. Similarly, in another positive development, Somali leaders in Mogadishu committed themselves, in early December, to ceasing hostilities and bringing an end to killings and abductions of innocent people, as well as to solving differences through dialogue and goodwill. They also agreed to cooperate through peaceful means to reopen the Mogadishu seaport and airport and to restore public services in the city.

57. It is encouraging that the work of the six Reconciliation Committees has continued despite controversy regarding representation at the plenary meeting of the Conference. The United Nations and its agencies stand ready to assist in the work of those Committees with technical support and relevant expertise.

58. Since then, however, serious hostilities have occurred involving the militias and supporters of some of the very leaders who signed the Eldoret Declaration and the December agreements. As a result, the delivery of essential humanitarian and development assistance continues to be seriously affected, the Mogadishu seaport and airport remain closed and recent fighting in and around Baidoa has blocked off an essential port of entry for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. I urge the Somali leaders to live up to their commitments to assure the delivery of much-needed humanitarian assistance and the safety of all international and national aid workers.

59. While Somalia may not be suffering from the drought affecting its neighbours, its humanitarian assistance needs remain critical. Unlike many affected countries in Africa which are expected to return to acceptable nutrition rates after the current drought-related crises are over, chronic food insecurity resulting in unacceptably high malnutrition rates has almost become endemic to parts of Somalia. Elsewhere in the world such rates are considered a trigger for major emergency interventions but, in Somalia, they have sadly become commonplace.

60. While some parts of Somalia remain unstable, relative stability continues to prevail in significant portions of the country. In some of these areas, community-based peace-building activities have evolved with little outside support. These initiatives present windows of opportunity for the United Nations, NGOs and donors to help to maintain and build upon the peace and stability that has been achieved. Failure to do so, however, could result in renewed conflict over scarce resources as an impoverished people, including increasing numbers of returnees from exile, are struggling to survive and rebuild their lives.

61. Against this background, I welcome the contribution of Ireland, Italy and Norway to the Trust Fund for Peace-Building in Somalia and the early contributions of Canada, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland and the European Community to the 2003 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Somalia. I call on other donors not only to contribute generously to the appeal, but also to do so without delay so as to allow the effective implementation of a full, coherent and balanced humanitarian and peace-building programme.

62. I would like to commend the efforts of my Representative for Somalia, the staff of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, as well as the Country Team and the many NGOs active in Somalia for their humanitarian activities and their contribution to the international effort to help to promote and support national reconciliation and peace in Somalia.